

SKILLS FOR POSITIVE RESOLUTION OF GRIEF

Hints for Helping the Hurt



- **Know your own feelings**
- **Give permission to grieve or not to grieve**
- **Understand differences between DENIAL and POSTPONEMENT**
- **Don't be afraid of tears and pain. Do not be afraid of the INTENSITY of emotions. Remain CALM and SUPPORTIVE. Do not attempt to distract or eliminate emotions. Give appropriate guidelines and boundaries of acceptable expression.**
- **Help person communicate what is going on inside self. Open communication lines. Ask for specifics. Be creative with ways to communicate.**
- **Give skills to cope with ANGER**
- **LISTEN. With your HEART, EARS, HEAD. Listen without judgment or advice. The bereaved can talk more than 1 person can listen.**
- **Realize that faith does not preclude grief**
- **Understand there are no right or wrong ways to grieve.**
- **RESPECT, but does not necessarily mean Agree With**
- **Don't minimize or depersonalize loss. "I know how you feel" closes doors, does not engage empathy**
- **Leave invitations to accept your presence**
- **Find ways to put MOTION BACK INTO THE EMOTION (hammer, brick, garage sale china, etc)**

- **Educate in the grief process. Knowledge is power to make choices**
- **Work on easing the Panic, not the pain**
- **Acknowledge feelings of guilt. Do not attempt to talk them out of guilt. Support their own search through the WHAT IFS and the IF ONLYS.**
- **Understand that all survivors change, become different people**
- **Be honest. Be specific**
- **Do not strip away HOPE. Hope is never gone. Just changes focus**
- **Do not cheer lead. Acknowledge emotions, SUPPORT, NOT MASK**
- **Keep in check your impulse to guide the process. Give up your preconceived ideas about the direction and pace this process SHOULD take. Eliminate OUGHT and SHOULD. Just BE THERE!**
- **Never let your technology or terminology overtake your human capacity for understanding and compassion**
- **Continue to be available long after you think they should be “over it”**
- **Trust client to grow by giving him the tools and encouragement he needs to find his own way through the Valley. Do not lead, but support. Become a GUIDEPOST along the journey.**
- **Your value lies in your ability to listen and to support**

